

VACUUM SEALING IN A RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

FACTS:

- Clostridium botulinum (C.bot) is one of the pathogens we are concerned about with ROP foods.
- C.bot requires a low or non-oxygen environment to grow.
- People who eat foods contaminated with C.bot toxin can become seriously ill or die.

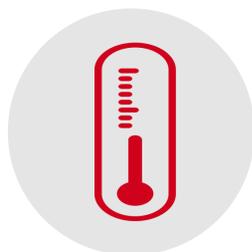


What is ROP?

ROP stands for Reduced Oxygen Packaging and can take numerous forms:

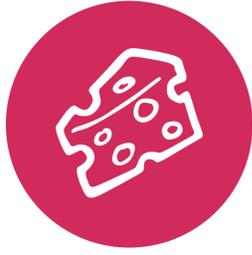
- VACUUM SEALING - removing oxygen from packaging
- MODIFIED ATMOSPHERE - Adding different gases (e.g. nitrogen) to packaging (a.k.a flushing)
- CONTROLLED ATMOSPHERE - Maintaining a specific mixed gas combination within packaging

WHICH FOODS ARE ALLOWED TO BE VACUUM SEALED?



- **FOOD THAT IS FROZEN** - Food that is either received frozen or rapidly frozen on-site and stays frozen until use
- **NON-POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS FOODS** - Food that does not require time/temperature control to remain safe (i.e. dry goods)
- **FOOD HELD REFRIGERATED FOR A SHORT TIME** - Food that is refrigerated (41F or below) and used within 2 days or less

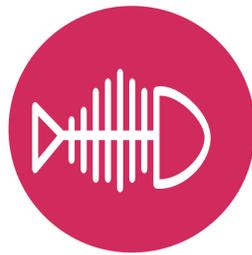
WHICH FOODS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE VACUUM SEALED?



- **SOFT CHEESES & CHEESE DIPS**
Ricotta cheese, cottage cheese, cheese spread, cheese mixed with vegetables & meat



- **COOKED UNCURED MEAT & POULTRY** - If held refrigerated for more than 2 days



- **SEAFOOD** - Seafood products that have been dehydrated, thermally processed, smoked, or acidified (unless you have a valid DEC seafood processing permit or variance)

VACUUM SEALING THE FOLLOWING FOOD ITEMS REQUIRES THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HACCP PLAN:



FOOD COOKED SOUS VIDE

- A method of cooking food slowly at a low temperature in a vacuum-sealed pouch to retain juice and aroma
- Specific time/temp requirements outlined in 18 AAC 31.265(i)

REFRIGERATED FOODS THAT ALSO HAVE AT LEAST ONE ADDITIONAL SAFETY BARRIER LISTED BELOW



- Food with a pH below 4.6
- Food with water activity below .91
- Food cured on-site with an approved process
- Meat & poultry cured at USDA facility
- Raw meats and vegetables

WHICH FOODS CAN BE VACUUM SEALED WITH ADDITIONAL HELP FROM A HEALTH OFFICER?

